

FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: October 16, 2014

Agenda Item: Marias River WMA Land Exchange

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 minutes

Background

FWP proposes to transfer 35.9 acres of the Marias River Wildlife Management Area to the Marias River Bird Preserve, LLC. The Preserve would transfer to FWP 76.7 acres, extend an existing access agreement to FWP, and grant administrative access across their property. A monetary exchange will not occur.

Public Involvement Process & Results

A final environmental assessment and decision notice have been completed and published, following public involvement. Public support has been voiced via formal comments received.

Alternatives and Analysis

- Proposed Action Alternative: FWP would proceed with the land exchange between FWP and the Preserve.
- No Action Alternative: FWP would not proceed with the land exchange between FWP and the Preserve. This would result in a loss of opportunity to protect and enhance additional native habitats, lose opportunity to secure administrative access to a portion of the WMA for management activities, and reduce the ability for the Preserve to manage its lands.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends that the Commission approve the land exchange between FWP and the Marias River Bird Preserve, LLC, protecting native habitats, providing secure administrative access to the southern portion of the Marias River WMA and expanding FWP's management to benefit wildlife populations.

Proposed Motion

I move the F&W Commission approve the land exchange between FWP and the Marias River Bird Preserve.